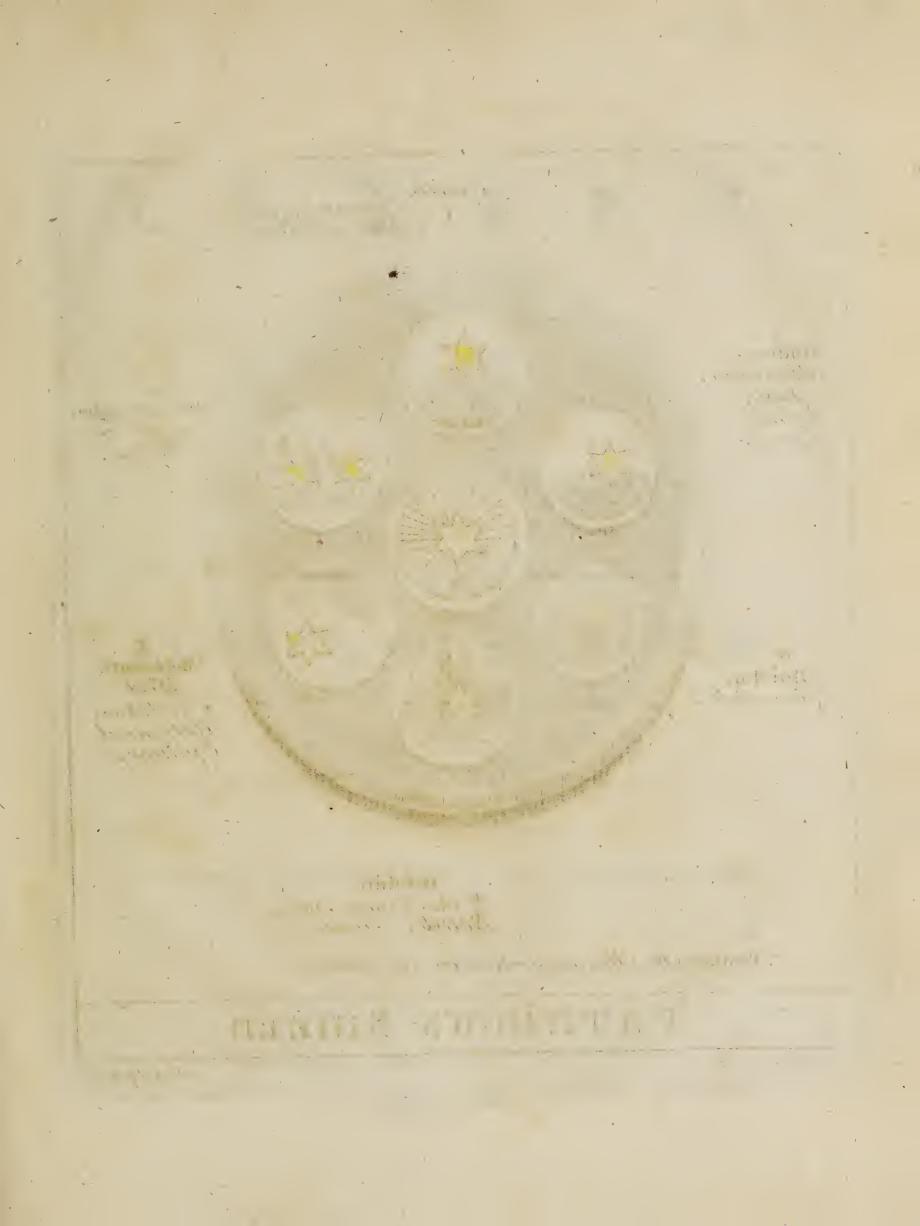


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North.

Canmathon, the

Lead of the Bear.

2 Colderno, Aldebaran. East. Vernal Equinox.

Cathl

6 Cathlin Laughin, Castor and Pollux.

3 Oloicho, Orion's Belt. 5
Beldurath,
West
Arcturus,
Autumnal
Equinox.

Berthin , 4 the Hunter's Star . South . Sirius.

7. Touthena, the Mariner's Star in the Center.

CATHMOR'S SHIELD.

9 Caldwal Soulp

Stukely delin.

#### E E

FROM

### DR. STUKELEY

T, O

#### Mr. MACPHERSON,

On his Publication of

## FINGAL and TEMORA.

WITH

A PRINT of CATHMOR'S SHIELD.

#### LONDON:

Printed by RICHARD HETT:

And Sold by J. BAILLIE, in Great Wild-street.

M DCC LXIII.



## To the candid READER.

HE Publisher of this letter, having the leave of both partys concern'd, hoped it would not be unacceptable to the Public; to have the sentiments, of a person, well versed in antient learning, on a curious subject, which has been some matter of controversy.

The Editor of Fingal, wherein he hoped to oblige the Public, has certainly a thousand living evidences of the authenticity of the Work, in that part of Brittain, which is the scene of action; and wherein himself was born and educated. and the learned gentleman who wrote this letter, has satisfyed himself therein, from very many internal proofs of it.

The Publisher hopes, the Reader will not deprive himself of the plesure, of reading these excellent poems, this valuable piece of antiquity, by empty arguments of doubt and difficulty; nor depreciate so great an honor to his country: by such a prejudice, as party once before did, for some years, even to the Paradise Lost.

The shield of Cathmor being a curiosity, we have engrav'd it, from the Doctor's own design.

To:

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L. ..

## To Mr. MACPHERSON.

12 May 1763.

SIR,

Have for some years, omitted mixing in Companys, and concourse; therefore almost unknowing, and unknown. which is the reason, I have not had the opportunity of meeting with you; which I have often wished for. and that in order to give you my thanks, and acknowledgment, for the plesure, I have

had in Fingal.

The bishop of St. David's, was pleased to send me your book, on account of my Carausus, as he term'd it; which I was much delighted with. I made a map of the place of action, between him and Oscar: having formerly printed a description of the Roman wall, there, built by Agricola, repair'd by Antoninus, and at last by Carausus. I wrote annotations on that poem. I lately had opportunity of being well acquainted with all the circumstances of Carausus, which we could collect from his coins, which I published: and from which only, we can obtain any degree of knowledg of his history.

At the same time, I was charm'd with Offian's poem, incomparably beautiful: and for its authenticity, I was for that reason, better enabled to judg, than most

people.

The

The conviction I had of the genuineness of the poems, in general; and their beautys grew upon me, in every page. and I must acknowledg, the world is highly oblig'd to you, for preserving so noble, so interesting a monument of high antiquity, belonging to Brittain.

You have indeed compleated the work, in giving us Temora, a poem admirable, and truly Epic. but neither Osian nor you, Sir, need the little praises I can bestow. the Work sufficiently speaks for itself, to all judges of true taste and judgment. and when some suspicious critics pretend to doubt of it; they make you a much higher complement than they intended, or you desired. nor are your learned differtations, and notes, less curious and instructing. Osian was worthy of your care; and happy in his cloud, for the revival.

You was too modest in not continuing the quotations in *Temora*, out of an apprehension of some injudicious people, conceiting therefrom, an imitation.

I have for some time, amused myself, in considering the first planters of the Brittish islands: in a work I intend to publish, the Medallic history of the first kings of Brittain. what I propose to do is on the plan of their coins; whereof there are innumerable now left. coins are real monuments, and genuin testimonys. our business is to find out their meaning. very many I can with considence explain; many more are reduc'd from them, to much probability.

The history of your hero's, has reviv'd in my mind, those ideas of the most antient Britons, which I had entertain'd of them; when in my younger years, I studyed

studyed their stupendous works still visible, Abury, Stonhenge and many more. your history has confirm'd

my mature thoughts about them.

When I rode over the most delightful downs of Salisbury plain, and those of Dorsetshire, cover'd over with thousands of large barrows, or tumuli, the sepultures of the first inhabitants of those beautiful regions; which the antient Greeks thought to be Elysum, the happy seat of the blessed, the fortunate island: I had then such notions of the antient Britons, as in great mesure, reading Osian has recall'd.

When I made innumerable drawings and admesurements of their works, which I found to be done on the eastern cubit; when I dug into many of the barrows, finding in them, what your heroes deposited, and like considerations; I was capable of relishing Fingal, more than many readers, and consequently with

more plesure.

I could plainly discern, your heroes to be the last remains of the original Britons, the first inhabitants of Dorsetshire and Wiltshire, by long successions of ages, and mutations of people, and force of invaders, at last driven into the Caledonian highlands, and into Ireland; where you have reviv'd, and illustrated their story.

When I read of their care in raifing their sepulture, the Bard singing their funeral Elegy, it reminded me, of the barrows abovemention'd, made with so much care, expence and elegance. the great number of them denotes, the long tract of years, of possession, by the same inhabitants.

It

It cannot be doubted, but colonys of people from the Continent, came hither, which we call Celts. the perpetual inquietudes there, wars, and depredations, must needs give them a desire, to try the security of a fertile island, blest with the profuse gifts of nature. the first we hear of, is that of the Belgæ under Divitiacus, who fixed his seat at the Devizes, so call'd from him. this was about 100 years before Cæsar's time. they held a good part of the southern country, to the sea side, especially Somersetshire: where somewhat of their dialect still remains.

These people were expelled Brittain and driven into Ireland, where they took possession of the south part of that island, under the name of Firbolgs; as you

justly affert.

I apprehend, this expulsion was perform'd by the Brittish king ELI; who on that account obtain'd the name of Maur, the great. he was son of Minocan son of Dunvallo, the samous legislator; spoken of by our learned Selden.

Of these princes, we have coins remaining. I know, we have great numbers of Brittish coins, of many preceding kings, and subsequent; in gold, electrum, filver and brass, to Roman times, and after. these are the

materials of my Medallic history.

ELI maur was fole monarch, at least, of that part we call England. he dy'd a little before Cæsar's invasion. he, according to the impolitic custom of Brittish kings, divided his kingdom between his three sons:
which savor'd Cæsar in his enterprize.

In Temora are vestiges of the passage of the Belgæ, from the western parts of Brittain, into Ireland: Inis huna, Cluda's bay, the hill of Lumon, describ'd like mount Ida in Homer, cover'd with wood, 1000 streams running down its sides. quere whether this be Plinlimmon?

You very justly observe, Sir, Temora page 94. that the Belgæ differ'd in religion, from the Caledonians: I must add from all the antient Britons. I shall show sufficiently, that the religion of the Druids, was that most antient, and purely patriarchal. what invasions, and populations came from the Continent, brought a religion different.

Throughout Fingal and Temora, the same religion appears, as of the aboriginal Britons: tho' the Druids were then, for the most part, ce as'd; being, as I ap-

prehend, become Christian.

I must beg leave, to differ from your exposition of the spirit of Loda: as if it meant Woden, or some idol of the Scandinavians. the poet means nothing more, than the aerial spirit of a deceased hero; sounder of the circle of stones, or temple: who withstood

Fingal, warring against one of his family.

I shall show very largely, that the first Brittish colonys came hither by sea, in the early ages of the world, before Gaul was peopled: when idolatry was not known, or very little. The Arabians who brought them, were the immediate posterity of ABRAHAM; with the Phænician navigators. they came hither for Tyn, and gave the first name to our islands, the Cassiterids; from an oriental word kastirab, signifying Tyn.

The Arabians were the first traders; and Tyn is mention'd particularly, among the metals of the Midianites; the very nation who came hither, and first peopled Brittain. *Numbers* xxxi. 22.

The judicious Tacitus de mor. Germ. writes, antiently those that went in search of new habitations, travell'd not by land, but were carry'd in sleets; and into

that mighty Ocean, fo boundlefs.

I need not launch out into the numerous proofs, relative to this matter. they will appear in my Work. in the Collections which you have published, is a good

deal of confirmation of my fentiments.

Such their inviolable faith given, hospitality, their general honesty, their heroism, love for after-same, their care for the rites of sepulture, funeral *Elogium*, notions of a future state, rewards and punishments. *Temora* page 150.

Their talent at poetry, music, the harp, their honor toward the fair fex: their Clans. their family tribes

are all symptoms of Oriental descent.

You observe, no traces of idolatry to the sun, the moon, the stars; in those most noble addresses of the poet Ossan to them; to the morning, the evening star, and the like. he concludes, they have a period.

Page 117. When the gates of the west are closed, on the sun's eagle eye. these gates are often mention'd by Homer, and by our poet. the former means Brittain, and in other passages I could recite. he means Brittain; tho' he knew not the name. he was well acquainted with Tyn; tho' he knew not the country it came from. Herodotus the like.

The fame of our old Britons was known, in horse-manship, and chariots: as well as their great pomp, in celebrating their high, religious festivals. all our old Brittish coins which are as old as the times we are speaking of, bear horses, and chariots, in reverse. all notoriously indicative of oriental, Phænician, Arabian extraction: which coins were given, as rewards to the Victors, at the chariot races, on public, religious sestivitys.

These particulars are not observed on the Continent,

who were generally barbarous, idolatrous.

Nor did we in old Brittain, take customs from the Greeks and Trojans. where there is any similitude, we took them from the same source as they; but before them, in time.

Such were these expressions, epithets, things; Morni, of the bounding steeds, the carborne heroes. i. e. charioteers, Cucullin's charioteerib'd, the shield of Cathmor, the sword of Luna, fabricated by a magician; probably a Druid, eminent that way; like Vulcan of Homer. the Druids ever had a notion of Magic affix'd to them. and to this day, 'tis continued in all their numerous Temples, in our islands; as I could show, in many particular instances.

These and like matters, are not borrowed from Homer, no more than from Milton. they come from the east: and the poetical descriptions are produc'd by a

fimilar genius.

'Tis a mean thought, derogatory to the honor of our country, to call it imitation: because excellent.

many

many genius's have arisen, many lost: you have saved one.

Homer, Virgil, Milton had learning and institution; Virgil, Milton had Homer before them. Milton had Homer, Virgil, and an infinity of great authors; he had the holy Scriptures, before him. all lived amidst a polite and learned people. how comes it about, that Ossian, in his separate poems, and in his Epics, comes not behind them: his Epic poems are artificially, and justly formed.

We cannot read *Toland*'s history of the Druids, taken from his own knowledg, but we observe very many striking proofs, of the authenticity of your Collections. they have not sufficient taste, and judgment who affect to doubt about it: or do not relish their beautys. whilst others say, there's as much variety, elegance, and harmony, in them, as in *Homer*; quantity for

quantity.

Kindred genius's we may affert them: invaluable remains of the learning and poetical spirit of the Druids: redeem'd by your care from longest obscurity; an honor to Brittain.

Some object to our poems, they must be compositions of late times, since the revival of learning. for say they, letters were not known in the highlands, at the time assign'd for Ossian.

I answer, for the highlands, and for the most antient Britons in general, for the Druids: Cæsar expresly informs us, the Druids used letters. he calls them Greek letters. indeed, they had them from Phæ-

nicia;

nicia; whence the Greeks had them, by Cadmus. but our inhabitants here, are before that time.

Sir Isaac Newton takes notice, in his chronology, that the Midianites had the use of letters. they were the sons of ABRAHAM, by Keturah. they were the merchant men, traders, navigators, who first came hi-

ther for Tyn, and first peopled the island.

Pliny says, Melcartus or Hercules was he who first traded in Tyn. Melcartus is the pastor king in lower Egypt, mention'd by Manetho. he is HESCOL of Moses, confederate of ABRAHAM. he was called Ogmius, which means literatus; one who knew the

alphabet way of writing, as Mr. Toland shows.

In Roman times, the Druids were driven, in great mesure, into Ireland. it is well known, that after the Romans had left Brittain, Ireland was the most florishing seat of learning, in Europe. the Druids carryed their letters thither. our Saxon historys tell us, kings and other great men went into Ireland, for sake of learning: and brought their letters thence. Bishop Nicolson in his Irish historical Library mentions from Archbishop Usher, Sir James Ware, Toland &c. innumerable books of the Druids, destroy'd in the first Christian times.

The Druids were driven likewise northward into Scotland, the highlands. and if we can suppose, they carryed not letters with them; learning could not fail to make its way thither, from Ireland: when there was so strict a communication between the two nations.

That there is so little mention of religion in these poems, is owing to the institution of the Druids; who

committed nothing of that kind to writing. the Bards, the Poets were an inferior Order to them, and not so

strict in that point of discipline.

We cannot fail of discerning, in the Fingalian heroes, the evanescent pictures, the expiring remains of that very great people, who came from the east 3000 years ago, who introduc'd their horses and chariots from the southern parts of Egypt, and Arabia; to traverse the delightful plains of Dorset, and Wilts. this was at first, before idolatry: and before the children of Israel quitted Egypt, and during their sojourning there.

I shall take notice, on a passage in the beginning of the excellent VIIth book of the Epic poem, concerning the lake of Lego, woodskirted, cover'd with mist;

which occasioned diseases and death.

Here was the residence of the ghosts of the deceased, during the interval between their death, and the pronouncing the funeral Elegy, by the Bard, over their tumuli. for it was not allowable without that ceremony perform'd, for the spirits of the dead, to accompany their ancestors in the airy hall: by which they meant the *Hades* of the antients. and it was the business of the spirit of the nearest relation of the deceased, in the mean while, to pour some of the mist, of the lake of *Lego*, over the grave.

I know, that among the Druids, was perform'd the ceremony of celebrating the mysterys of the antients. the thing was deriv'd from highest times, from the *Curetes*, *Dioscuri*, relations of *Melchisedec*, a race of Canaanites, before idolatry: who first cultivated ship-building, and navigation. to these our Ara-

bian

bian predecessors were joined, in religion and occupation. they were all of the antient, patriarchal

religion.

The fact is mention'd by Artimedorus, who lived in the time of Augustus. he speaks of a Brittish isle, where the Samothracian mysterys (as he calls them) were performed with great solemnity. in the mysterys was celebrated the descent into Hades. and one would be apt to imagin, that the story of Ulysses in Homer going to consult the dead, is hither to be referr'd: for the poet says, he was in the ocean.

And so perhaps was the isle of Calypso, she being some Brittish Druidess he conversed with. for Homer makes it to be in the ocean. a report of Ulysses being in the ocean, is mentioned by Tacitus, de mor.

Germ. and by other old authors.

We can't but discern the similitude between our report of the lake of Lego, of its inhabitants, and the other circumstances; and the state of the departed among the Egyptians, Greeks, and other antient nations: all which were certainly represented in the mysterys; and their state of reviviscence, new birth, and the like. indeed, at first when celebrated by the Dioscuri, or sons of God, and by their disciples, our Druids, all patriarchal priests; there was nothing of idolatry, or superstition. no doubt, but in time, at least, in other countrys, a hundred species of corruption crept in. but we are to remark, that the pouring of mist on the tumulus from this lake, was the symbol of regeneration, to a new and spiritual life: which was done in the mysterys, by water.

C 2

St. Paul who was master of all learning, philosophy, theology, uses this same term, belonging to the mysterys. I Corinth. x. 2. the Israelites were baptised

by Moses, in the cloud.

I remark'd a particular in the Fingalian astronomy, not to be pass'd over. page 255. a bard describing the night. I see the trees ore turn'd, the shocks of corn on the plain; the wakeful hind on his way. a blast removes the cloud; he sees the starry plough of the north.

By this is meant the constellation, we call the great bear; by our common people, the wain or wagon. our old Britons call'd it the plough. it means the plough of Bootes or Arcturus, Arctophylax, more rightly Arcophylax; meaning really, father NOA, who brought

aftronomy to the post-diluvian world.

The Scripture tells us, he became an husbandman. and in this character, posterity consecrated him, into this great asterism. he bears in his right hand, the goad, for that purpose, in his left a sickle. these stars would claim their attention, from the earlyest times. for in Arabia, when the first star of Aries sets, this constellation, particularly the most conspicuous star thereof, Arcturus arises.

It shews them the time of the vernal Equinox: the

great quarterly panegyre, or public facrifice.

Hence this afterism of NOA was formed with a sheaf of corn, meaning the first fruits of harvest: according to patriarchal usage. this sheaf, the Alexandrian astronomers, many ages after, turn'd into Coma Berenices, in compliment to the Queen.

I thought

I thought it worth while, to give you this extract out of a Volume I have wrote on the antient, patriarchal

astronomy.

In Temora page 118. you well observe, the description of Cathmor's shield, is a curious piece of antiquity: and a proof of the early knowledg of navigation, among the inhabitants of Brittain and Ireland.

Cathmor was a great navigator. his shield, as all those in our poems, as to the field, are generally blue. on it, rose seven bosses, enamell'd; with seven principal

stars, particularly observ'd by failors.

nathon with unshorn beams. which he explains from the name, the head of the bear, star of the north. he means the lesser bear. a star much observ'd by the Phænicians: near the Pole. therefore in the upper part of the shield. North.

N. B. The field of the shield is azure: the verge

gules; to speak in the heraldic way.

2. Colderna, sharp beam, rising slaunt from the cloud. this is the star eastward. Star of the vernal Equinox. I take it to be that which astronomers call Aldebaran, or the bull's eye, rising above the Pleiades. crouded together, like a celestial cloud.

3. Olricho robed in mist, ruler of night. this is Orion's belt. a luminous part of the heaven there,

like a celestial mist.

4. Birthin, the red eye of Birthin, looks through a grove on the hunter, at his return by night, with the spoils of the bounding roe: fire of the hill.

This

This is a description of the star in the lower part of the shield, the south, opposite to the northern bear. it means the great Sirius, which is the largest in appearance, of the fixt stars, and observed to be red in color. of which a paper of my friend Mr. Barker of Lyndon, Rutland, in the Philosophical Transactions. Vol. LI. II. page 498.

'Tis call'd the fire of the hill properly, being very low in the horizon, just above the earth; in the evening, when the hunters return home, they see it blazing thro' the wood; like the *Baaltien* fires of the Druids, raised on hill tops, on May day evening; in

memory of Creation then compleated.

5. Beldurath in the western point of the shield, star of the autumnal Equinox; opposite to Aldebaran. half sinks its western light, says the poet; star of the twilight. this is a just description of that great star, we call Arcturus, mention'd by Job the Arabian. star of the twilight, appearing low in the heavens, and toward evening.

6. Cathlin beam of the wave, glittering on a rock, by

reflection: the soft beam. on the water.

Laughin shining on the blue wave. as the sea ap-

pears, at night.

These are the brother stars of benign aspect; the Castor and Pollux of the Greeks, but in most antient Chaldean spheres, they represented the two patriarchs JABAL and JUBAL the original shepherds, and great improvers of astronomy, and inventors of music. these fill'd up the remaining part of the verge of Cathmor's shield.

7. Lastly. Wide in the midst arose the cloudless beam of Tonthema; that star, which look'd by night, on the course of the sea-tos'd Larthon; a meteor of the waves. Larthon the first of Bolga's race, who travell'd on the winds. a fine poetic expression, of an Æolus, an expert navigator.

This is the resplendent star in the center of the shield, that call'd the goat. and thus we compleat the orb of Cathmor's famous shield: containing many of the principal stars of antiquity, observ'd by failors; the Pleiades, Ilyades, Arcturus, Orion mention'd in Job, the first writer; in Isaiah, in Homer and Virgil; such as chiefly in our country are visible. and here describ'd, as it were in a circle.

'Tis obvious to remark, the poets art in the choice; to procure a diversity in the description of each: he has, in miniature as it were, copyed the whole circuit of heaven, all its zones, quarters, seasons. 'tis worthy of admiration.

I do not pretend to write a comment on your two Volumes; but thus much I did, to testify my thankfulness for your care in preserving so valuable remains of our old Bards, and Druids.

W. Stukeley.

## Explication of the Shield.

- 2. Canmathon, head of the bear. a calm sea. North.
- 2. Colderno, Aldebaran, rifing. from a cloud. the vernal Equinox.
- 3. Olricho, Orion's belt. in a mist.
- 4. Berthin. Sirius. the hunter's star thro' a wood. South.
- 5. Beldurath. Arcturus, the autumnal Equinox. star setting under a cloud. West.
- 6. Cathlin. Caftor and Pollux, shining on a rock, Laughin. in the sea.
- 7. Tonthema, in the center, glorious. the Mariner's star. sea tempestuous. the goat.

 - 4 

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